

BRASSPOUNDER

September 2019, Issue 136



Welcome to this edition of *BrassPounder*, which covers FISTS CW Club Europe's [on-air activities](#).

Firstly, apologies for the later publication of this edition: due in part to issues in Graham's life and also in part to issues in mine. Graham and I can slow things down a bit on our own, but when we work together you should really see us go! Or not.

As I write this life seems a little bit damp, if I'm honest. I am in Wales on my "summer" holiday because when the family went away to Greece I was unable to get the time off from work. Now I am able to get time off, the family of course are back to work and university etc and so it's me and my dearest. And of course it is raining – I am sat in a house overlooking the beautiful Horton / Port Eynon bay but the rain and wind coming off the Bristol Channel is ferocious and I have no aerals to withstand this. And the final insult of course is that the work from which I could get no holiday in the real summer, is, or was, Thomas Cook. You see my point.



Horton in a break from the rain

Nevertheless, life goes on and some things are fun. I built a little 'magic eye' tuning device from our own Paul, MOBMN. It's basically a zero-beat indicator but he has also added a rather neat function. Because the LED flashes with time to the incoming signal, once it is tuned in, John G4YTJ, Fists 19024 had a bright idea. In his own words...

"Hi Paul,

I watched your latest videos just after reading the article in RadCom about Sotabeams Wolfwave audio processor. The Wolfwave has a feature for reconstituting CW. It struck me that your magic eye could be used to trigger an oscillator in time with the incoming CW. This would be a poor man's reconstituted CW. Listening to this oscillator would be much easier on a crowded band than the incoming signal. I'm sure the Wolfwave would do a better job, and it has many other features, but an oscillator gated by the magic eye would be an easy thing to try. What do you think?"

Well, Paul had a think and faster than I could type he had done it. It works and works well and will be a good addition to my Argonaut 515 which has barn door filters. If you wish to see the MagicEye working, go here.... <https://youtu.be/1-PmhvUr1gM>

More on the Magic Eye in due course but if you wish to build the Eye or the CW Reconstitutor version, do contact Paul, MOBMN either privately or on groups.io.

Incidentally, Keith, GOHKC, F16205 has bought a Wolfwave and I hope to be reporting on this in a later KN.

Tentec

I have long been drip fed the old myth that TenTec has some sort of magical QSK on its radios but I have never really been in a position to see for myself. Well, an old and good friend, Terry G8ALR, had an old Ten Tec Argonaut which he decided was broken and was about to chuck out. I yelled, as usual, to chuck it my way which he duly did. I managed to strip it and discovered that it was almost certainly the finals that had gone. I rebuilt it, restrung the tuning pointers etc, cleaned it up and with components donated by friends Chris, GU3TUX and Dave, GOAYD, both FISTS, I was able to get the full storming 5 watts out again. It's still not right because the SWR / PWR meter is extremely oversensitive so there's likely a fault on the control board (unless anyone thinks different) but that's a job for another day.



However, QSK...well, yes, TenTec QSK really IS quite magical. I've made a few QSO now with the Argo and I am struck by the very gentle, silent nature of the QSK. It's not magic of course but it's silent. Why do some makers insist on clattering relays when they could go the Tentec route instead? Elecraft don't, and my K2 is the closest to the 515 I have used but I do think, in this one area, TenTec are superior. So, for a nice rig thanks Terry, for the bits to get it going...thanks Chris and Dave.

Projects

What are you to? Has anyone yet built the Hamclock other than me? I know there's been a few kits sold so do please send me photos I can share with others in KN next time.

Bands

Not sure about the bands recently because I've been otherwise occupied. I've made some good QSO and some days, most days since redundancy, I've made none so I shall let the ladder speak for itself. New this time round we welcome Steve M0SHM, Fists No 17415, Previous call signs – 2E0BIX, M3PRY. Steve says he is still learning Morse but happy to ragchew at 15WPM right now. Welcome to you Steve and we all hope you continue to love and live Morse's finest offering (even if it was Vail's!). I have done almost zero 2m work since last time – even the absolutely mega lift of two weeks ago passed me by. Terrible.

I have met a few non-FISTS recently who's CW is appalling. Stations running before they can walk and, worst of all, running letters and words together with no spaces. Presumably they wouldn't write like that so why do they send CW like it?? I'm sure we should comment on it to them, else how will they improve...yet, I never do. I don't know their circumstances of course, they might be 104 years old for all I know, or severely disabled. Perhaps the rubbish CW is the best they will ever send, and so if they enjoy it...who am I to knock it? I don't mind them sending bad CW really...but I do wish they would slow down, for their sake, not mine. Speed really isn't everything is it? I tried a few years back to get faster and have all my QSO at about 25-30wpm. Then I noticed that most of the natters came in at about 18-20...so now I sit happily at 18-20 wpm. It fills me with dismay when more and more DXpeditions and SES operate at what must be machine speeds. What IS the point??

So, perhaps if we try to work someone who's CW is poorly sent, rather than screaming at them as we would like, perhaps the solution is to simply send QRS. (Note, I am not chucking rocks at anyone, just thinking aloud).

Proposed fun activity

I know some members are now using postcodes and place names etc to liven up their 2m QSO evenings. I think this is a really good idea and someone did approach me to create a 'coach tour' activity. I will get on to this but redundancy had clouded my view...please bear with me. It looks as if October and November are a bit bleak for FISTS activities so I shall get my thinking cap on.

Portable working

Does anyone have an appetite for portable working? Either outdoors on foot or wired up to a car or holiday home. I really enjoy portable work (my dog, Yagi, hates the aerial mast over his head so runs off. This seriously curtails my /P activities as you can imagine!!). I was walking yesterday and came across the ruins of the old radar station on Rhossili Down – an impressive set of ruins now (the Army demolished it in 1944). Anyway, it occurred to me that it would be fun to operate /P from the ruin (my wife really doesn't get it and anyway it's raining). If there IS a stomach for /P then I can think of some good activities! Please let me know.

Have fun and I hope to meet you on the air.

David G4YVM F15878

Results for Ladder August 2019

Callsign	Posn	Prev	Move	Total	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
G4LRG	1	1	-	639	76	79	100	67	81	64	81	91
G0ILN	2	2	-	579	65	59	86	60	74	71	79	85
G4LHI	3	3	-	509	78	78	64	72	55	49	59	54
I5EFO	4	4	-	504	44	72	54	48	69	57	64	96
M5ABN	5	5	-	404	36	61	47	54	41	46	66	53
M0PBZ	6	6	-	330	36	22	42	43	57	49	45	36

G0BON	7	9	↑	326	42	42	6		57	58	49	72
OH7QR	8	7	↓	300	26	52	40	37	15	40	49	41
2E0DPH	9	10	↑	293	42	51	24	43	30	21	42	40
M0GSX	10	8	↓	283	22	18	39	24	48	57	48	27
DL3HR	11	11	-	279	27	37	52	37	31	28	33	34
MW0BGL	12	12	-	263	42			42	48	37	48	46
G7WHI	13	14	↑	226		26	48	21	49	18		64
G3XVL	14	13	↓	198	30	57	41	27	18	4	9	12
MI0WWB	15	15	-	188	15	14	20	25		51	36	27
G3ZRJ	16	17	↑	149	18	25		8	12		62	24
G0JHK	17	16	↓	144	33		42	42			27	
M0DRK	18	18	-	105	7	9	18	18	18		13	22
G0OEY	=19	=19	-	89		26	10	13	7		23	10
SP9NLI	=19	=22	↑	89	12	19	12	6	3		7	30
9H1PI	21	=19	↓	79	29	19	17	14				
M0UZE	22	21	↓	76	6	19	9	24	6	3	6	3
OH2BN	23	=22	↓	65		9		20	3	15	12	6
IW2JJS	24	24	-	49		23			15	11		
G0XAH	25	25	-	48				21	18	9		
G0UYG	26	26	-	47	6		29				12	
G4XUZ	27	27	-	33						15	18	
OZ8AGB	28	=29	↑	27			3	3	3	6		12
G4DNP	29	28	↓	25	6	9	5					5
G3ZOD	=30	=29	↓	15							15	
SP2SWI	=30	=29	↓	15	6					9		
SV2BBK	32	32	-	10				4			3	3
G0TLU	=33	33	-	6							6	
M0SHM	=33	-	↑	6								6

Comments for Ladder August 2019

Entrant	Comments
Nils DL3HR	the conds during the sessions on 25.08. were a bit better than 11.08. Still hvy qsb. Again I was very happy to meet all the cw-friends. Vy 73 es cu in September!
Ivan G0BON	Had two great sessions, evening of last session was quite noisy in my location. Many thanks all for the friendly QSO's
Richard G0ILN	Good fun as usual. Richard G0ILN Fist 398.
Andrew G0OEY	Thanks everyone.
Robin G4DNP	Pleased to earn a few points with QRP. QSOs made during vacation to Pescara, Italy. 73s Robin
Peter G4LHI	G4LHI Claim for Aug Ladder, gud fun as usual, but I'm afraid the 25th PM clashed with the exciting finish of the England Aussie test match hi Well done Ben. G4LHI # 2219

John G4LRG	Once again the afternoon sessions were hard work but great to see all of the activity. Thanks to everyone who took part and gave out points.
Dave G7WHI	Great to catch up with everyone again, thanks for the qso's and nice to work some new stations on 20m and 40m as well as 80m. 73 for another month
Paul M0GSX	Hi To David G4YVM and all at FISTS, Hope you're all well. It was lovely to work you on 2M CW David - a very nice contact. Please find attached my log for August - only managed 1 Session this month but the band was in good shape for the last hour or so for the Evening Session with very much improved signals towards the other end of the S Meter for a change. Thanks again for all the work you do for our club behind the scenes its very much appreciated. Till next Month best 73 Paul M0GSX #17642.
Phil M0PBZ	Just entered one day's worth on 25th August Terrible conditions in afternoon but much better by evening
Steve M0SHM	Some deep QSB.
Mark M0UZE	Thanks
Pete M5ABN	Good fun as always, evening sessions much more productive, see you all in September 73 Pete M5ABN #6423
William MI0WWB	Tnx to all who worked me. Must do better!!
Erkki OH7QR	Hello David, Please find my Ladder log for August. Many thanks and 73 de Erkki 8318
Michael OZ8AGB	Nice meeting other members at these events. I am getting better on my straight key. Did more than one QSO each of the Sundays which is a new high score for me.

Upcoming Events

October 2019

First day	Last day	Event	Times
Sun 13 Oct		FISTS Eu Ladder	1400-1600 UTC, 1800-2000 UTC
Sun 27 Oct		FISTS Eu Ladder	1400-1600 UTC, 1800-2000 UTC

November 2019

First day	Last day	Event	Times
Sat 02 Nov	Sun 03 Nov	RSGB 2m CW Marconi Contest	1400-1400 UTC
Sun 10 Nov		FISTS Eu Ladder	1400-1600 UTC, 1800-2000 UTC
Sun 24 Nov		FISTS Eu Ladder	1400-1600 UTC, 1800-2000 UTC

December 2019

First day	Last day	Event	Times
Sun 01 Dec	Sat 07 Dec	FISTS Eu Straight Key Week	0001-2359 UTC
Sun 08 Dec		FISTS Eu Ladder	1400-1600 UTC, 1800-2000 UTC
Sun 22 Dec		FISTS Eu Ladder	1400-1600 UTC, 1800-2000 UTC